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ABSTRACT

The paper describes an inservice training program designed to bring together special education teachers, elementary teachers, and administrators to address the following issues: (1) attitudes toward integration of handicapped students into regular classrooms; (2) communication between regular and special educators; (3) specific skills for regular education teachers to deal more effectively with special needs students; and (4) establishment of a framework for sustained, within-building collaborative programming between regular and special educators. A total of 25 participants took part in the inservice training program, which emphasized practical strategies and was given over two weekends. Comparison with nonparticipants suggested that significant changes occurred in teacher willingness and perceived ability to work with others, reported knowledge of individualized instruction and classroom management, and appreciation of the benefits that derive from collaborating with others. Discussion of issues related to improving building level collaboration includes administrative support, teacher release time, recognition for team participation, and utilization of prereferral or intervention assistance. Includes 28 references. (DB)

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Together Schools--Training Regular and Special Educators to Share Responsibility for Teaching All Students

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Running head: COLLABORATION INSERVICE TRAINING

This paper was presented at the 68th Annual Conference of the Council for Exceptional Children, Toronto, April, 1989.

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Together Schools--Training Regular and Special Educators to Share Responsibility for Teaching All Students

The 1980s witnessed dramatic changes, with legal, social, as well as economic forces converging to alter significantly the face of public education. For example, a burgeoning number of exceptional learners were integrated into regular classroom situations (i.e., the "mainstreaming" movement). Data indicate that the majority of handicapped students now receive at least a portion of their instruction alongside regular classmates (Twelfth Annual Report to Congress on Implementation of Education of the Handicapped Act, 1990). Many other students who would have been referred previously for "pull-out" services (i.e., special classroom placement) are being retained in the regular classroom (Will, 1986). It is not surprising that the teaching skills of many regular education teachers are being severely tested (Baker & Zigmond, 1990; Walker & Rankin, 1984).

In the past, special and regular education operated primarily as two separate, distinct systems (e.g., Brown, Gable, Hendrickson, & Algozzine, in press). Today, there is growing sentiment for lowering the barriers that once separated these two educational operations (e.g., Stainback & Stainback, 1984; Will, 1986). Pressure is mounting to redefine the professional roles and responsibilities of public school personnel. However, in dismantling the traditional "two-box" system of public education, both general and special educators require new skills if they are

to assume a shared responsibility for teaching all students (Gable, Friend, Laycock, & Hendrickson, 1990).

Recognition of the number of at-risk and handicapped students who require specialized instruction is growing. As a consequence, the need to bolster the teaching capacity of regular and special educators is becoming more acute, which poses a major challenge for school systems. With an increasingly diverse school-aged population, regular classroom teachers encounter a wide range of management and instructional difficulties. Studies have shown, however, that few general educators have had preservice or inservice coursework on how to teach at-risk or mildly handicapped students (Brown et al., in press). A related issue pertains to the need for approaches to instructing teachers that will maximize the likelihood that those skills singled out for training will find their way to the classroom(s). Unfortunately, the literature suggests that the bulk of traditional inservice practices are seriously flawed. Too few strategies that teachers are exposed to ever are applied in the classroom. Accordingly, ways must be found to help ensure that approaches for training teachers will produce the desired affect (i.e., improved student performance).

The subject of teacher collaboration and consultation has sparked widespread interest among public school personnel. Some authorities assert that consultation and support services should be "delivered by regular and special education as an integrated model" (Haufner, 1988). Indeed, more and more teachers are being

called upon to collaborate with and support their colleagues in addressing the needs of at-risk and handicapped learners; yet few regular or special educators have been prepared to carry out that task (e.g., Brown et al., in press; Gable, Young, & Hendrickson, 1987; Idol, 1989). Knowledge remains limited about how to establish and maintain a partnership between regular teachers, special teachers, and administrators at the building level. Clearly, it is essential to determine what skills regular and special educators will need to meet the challenges associated with a changing regular classroom population. But, this alone is not enough. School systems must also determine how best to share these skills and to inspire in teachers a willingness to work together for the benefit of all students.

The purpose of this paper is to present an inservice training program that was designed to bring together special education teachers, elementary teachers, and administrators to accept the challenge of serving special needs students in the regular classroom. We begin with a rationale for choosing to emphasize prereferral intervention (or "intervention assistance") in the inservice program. Collaboration between regular and special educators as a means of facilitating specialized programming in the regular classroom is advocated. In devising the inservice program, it was necessary to identify what to teach the participants. An explanation of the methodology employed to determine the skills teachers should possess to plan cooperatively instruction for all

students is provided. Next, discussion focuses on the inservice training literature around which the present program was organized; emphasis is on how to impart skills judged essential to developing a collaborative relationship. Finally, results that surfaced from an evaluation of the inservice program are presented along with some thoughts on the future of school-based collaboration.

Rationale for Inservice Training

There has been a tremendous surge of interest in discovering ways to accommodate special needs students in the regular classroom. So-called "prereferral intervention" programs have been mandated in 23 states and recommended in 11 others; the bulk of the responsibility for their implementation rests with regular classroom teachers (Carter & Sugai, 1989). Accordingly, a variety of approaches are emerging to facilitate the implementation process: collaborative consultation, teacher assistance teams, teacher support teams, resource/consultation, peer coaching, and so on. One common characteristic of each of these approaches is the intent to provide assistance to regular classroom teachers quickly and informally within the general education setting (see Idol, 1989; Pugach & Johnson, 1988; Reisberg & Wolf, 1986). While only in its formative stage, the collaboration movement has generated sufficient empirical support to encourage a closer look by various public schools (e.g., Chalfant, Pych, & Moultrie, 1979; Chalfant & Pysh, 1989). Although descriptions vary, teacher collaboration usually refers to a problem-solving process that

involves two or more persons working together to better serve a student for whom they accept some responsibility (Gable et al., 1990). For these reasons, encouraging teacher collaboration to strengthen classroom skills was the primary focus of the inservice program.

Content of Inservice Training

Various sources of literature were reviewed to identify the teaching strategies deemed most important for regular classroom teachers to possess. Sources included Educational Resources Information Clearinghouse (ERIC), periodicals published over the past five years, and textbooks dealing with management and instruction of mildly handicapped students in special and mainstream settings. A record was maintained of each procedure recommended and the strategies most often cited were chosen to comprise the content of the inservice program. A second and more subjective criteria was applied that pertained to the practicality of the strategy; that is, those strategies that were viewed as being too demanding or too intrusive were eliminated from consideration. The five teaching strategies that emerged from our review included: (a) individualized instruction, (b) group contingency management, (c) curricular modification, (d) cooperative learning, and (e) a supportive learning environment (see Table 1). Together, they exemplify many of so-called "best practices" for teaching special students (see Brown et al., in press; Englert, 1984; Johnson & Johnson, 1986; Larrivee, 1986;

Reith & Evertson, 1988). Therefore, these strategies were incorporated into the inservice program as a way to merge aspects of regular and special education to produce more comprehensive educational services.

Insert Table 1 about here

Organization of Inservice Training

The literature suggests and experience substantiates the fact that inservice training of teachers usually is conducted according to a "one-shot" workshop or lecture format (Cavallaro, J. Stowitschek, George, & C. Stowitschek, 1980). Most inservice programs are scheduled at the end of the school day and carried out under conditions that afford teachers scant opportunity to gain "hands-on" experience (Marshall, 1988). Emphasis is on telling or discussing rather than doing (e.g., Smith, 1981). In addition, the content of most programs is general, rather than specific in nature--breath is given precedence over depth of material coverage. As Cavallaro et al. (1980) point out, rarely do programs offer models that demonstrate the application of skills that are compatible with the classroom realities of the participants. Nor have many programs been sensitive to individual differences among the participants (Margolis & McGettigan, 1988). Critics further assert that even if the content is focused and relevant, there is no assurance that the skills trained will transfer to the

participant's classroom. Indeed, there is little indication that many inservice programs include any provision for generalization and maintenance of skilled trained.

Another reason cited for the failure of the bulk of inservice programs is an absence of any incentive for teacher attendance and participatic` (e.g., Banner, 1985; Margolis & McGettigan, 1988). Recommended incentives that communicate the importance a school system attaches to staff development might include release time, financial renumeration, college credit, or continuing education units (Hall, 1981). Finally, authorities underscore the importance of the evaluation of inservice training, evaluation that not only verifies the effectiveness of training but also charts a course for future staff development activities (e.g., Cavaliaro et al., 1980).

Viewed together, the accumulated literature reveals that inservice training is plagued by numerous problems. Not withstanding these shortcomings, it still appears to be the most practical way to renew and augment skills of regular and special educators. In drawing from the modest body of information that covers aspects of inservice training that have been proven effective, we sought in the present training program to:

1. Emphasize specific tactics and active participation of trainees.
2. Introduce strategies of proven effectiveness that teachers could easy apply.

3. Include all members of a "building team" who might work together on a daily basis.
4. Provide extrinsic rewards for participation.
5. Conduct formative evaluation of training to improve present and future inservice efforts.

Method

Participants

A total of twenty-five participants--seven special educators, 11 regular elementary teachers, and seven building principals or assistant principals, took part in the inservice training program. All were employed by a large urban school system and given the opportunity by the school district to participate in the inservice program because they were assigned to elementary schools with a high incidence of special needs students. Participants attended the inservice sessions on a voluntary basis, received an honorarium from the school system, and had the option of earning Continuing Education Units (CEUs) from an area university. A second group, composed of district elementary school personnel (N=18) who did not receive training, was randomly selected to serve as a control group for purposes of evaluation.

General Procedures

First, all of the special educators participated in a week end training session that focused on the changing scene in public education, the emerging collaborative role of the special educator, and on corresponding skill demands. Friday evening (4.5 hours)

and all day Saturday (6.5 hours) sessions examined the need for and some of the potential obstacles to effective collaboration. Specific strategies associated with success in collaboration and consultation were presented. Teachers also were given a series of readings that pertained to the content of training and simple assignments to carry out in their schools during the following week (e.g., practice using general and descriptive praise statements, adjust the academic respond demands of selected students).

Next, one or two regular elementary classroom teachers, along with the principal or assistant principal, joined their building level special education colleagues in a second inservice week end. At this time, training began with a brief discussion of changes taking place in public education and the need to refine and extend classroom practices. The majority of the presentation concentrated on specific management and instructional strategies for dealing with special needs students in the regular classroom (e.g., individualized instruction, group contingency management). In this way, a rationale for collaboration was offered first and the fundamental tools for assuming a shared responsibility for instruction of special needs students provided next. Then, participants practiced using a step-by-step decision-making model for identifying and dealing with problems related to school learning and adjustment. Together, the activities afforded opportunity for: (a) various professionals to gain a more positive

attitude toward each other's responsibilities and (b) to work together to solve a predesignated problem (Figure 1).

Insert Figure 1 about here

Saturday, role play and practice activities were continued that consisted of a series of case studies constructed around actual referral problems. The case studies required teams of regular and special educators and administrators to: (a) analyze the available information, (b) pinpoint the problem, (c) explore possible solutions in light of the time and resources required and, most importantly, (d) problem solve together. Initially, the inservice trainer modeled a step-by-step problem analysis, identification, and problem-solving process. Later, the teams applied the same stepwise process to tackle a series of case studies which gradually became more complex. After a specified amount of time (e.g., 20 minutes), each team reported back to the entire group and shared their conclusions. Feedback and suggestions on the proposed solutions were given first by the trainer and then by other team members.

Evaluation Questionnaire

An 18-item closed response questionnaire was developed and revised subsequent to formative review by selected teachers and administrators. The final version of the questionnaire appears in the appendix. The questionnaire identified the number of courses

the participants (and nonparticipants) had taken which addressed at-risk or special populations of students and the number of students in their classes judged to be low performing or difficult-to-teach (items 1 & 2). Items 3-18 consisted of a series of questions on various aspects of the interface between regular and special education. Questions addressed knowledge, attitudes, and behavior of respondents toward collaboration using a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 being a very negative response, 3 being a neutral response, and 5 being a very positive response. The eighteenth question asked teachers to report the number of contacts they had with colleagues regarding instructional issues on a weekly basis. A final open-ended item allowed respondents to comment on any issue they wished in narrative form. The teacher questionnaire was administered to determine if inservice participants differed significantly from teachers who did not participate in the training with regard to knowledge, attitude, or behavior associated with school collaboration. Additionally, an analysis of differences between regular educators and special educators, all of whom took part in the inservice training program was conducted. Finally, informal interviews were conducted with groups and individual participants.

Evaluation Design

A static group comparison design (Campbell & Stanley, 1963) was used to evaluate the effectiveness of the inservice training program. Questionnaires were administered to teachers and

administrators who participated in the inservice training program and a cohort of elementary teachers and administrators who were not exposed to the training program. Questionnaire responses were subjected to statistical analysis by means of a Chi-square procedure.

A second form of evaluation consisted of a strategy known as triangulation (McMillan & Schumacher, 1989). In applying this strategy, descriptive accounts from multiple respondents are examined using three or more data collection procedures (e.g., group discussion, narrative written feedback, and individual interviews). Information collected from multiple respondents is combined and individual responses are weighed according to the regularity with which they are reported (e.g., "I'm more willing to seek out the special education teacher for assistance"). While not a flawless technique, triangulation can produce a more complete picture of the effectiveness of the training process and is a useful counterpart to quantitative analysis.

Results

Comparison of Participants and Nonparticipants

Analysis of the questionnaire data indicated that there were no significant differences in the number of courses taken or the number of at-risk students taught by the participants (N=25) and nonparticipants (N=18). When comparing other responses of school personnel who received the inservice training with those who did not, a number of differences surfaced. Comparisons of six of the

questions indicated differences between the two groups at $p < .05$ level of significance. Participants reported significantly higher positive responses to items dealing with: knowledge of how to work with other teachers; knowledge of individualized instruction and classroom management; the ability to work with other teachers; whether working together increases performance of at-risk students; and, whether teachers benefit from working with each other. Two more questions resulted in differences that approached significance--interest in and ability to resolve problems by working with others ($p < .06$ and .07, respectively). Although not always statistically significant, those who took part in the inservice program reported more positive responses to the survey items overall than did their nonparticipant counterparts.

Insert Tables 2 and 3 about here

Comparison of Special and Regular Educators

Statistically significant differences, at the $p < .05$ level, were found on only three questions for special education and general education teachers who participated in the inservice program. Special educators reported having taken more courses addressing at-risk students; they also reported teaching a larger percentage of at-risk students. Lastly, the participating regular educators indicated a greater willingness to help colleagues adjust their classroom practices for special needs students.

Discussion

It is unlikely that educational policy regarding exceptional learners soon will shift from the current doctrine of delivering instruction in the "least restrictive environment" (LRE). Successful integration of handicapped as well as retention of at-risk students hinges on the proposition that general educators can teach most special learners in the regular classroom (Kerr & Nelson, 1989). Yet studies reveal that most teachers lack effective means for serving an increasingly diverse population of mainstreamed students (e.g., Baker & Zigmond, 1990; Gable et al., in press). To realize the goal of successful integration, there is growing support for bringing regular and special education together to collaborate on programming instruction for at-risk and special needs students.

The present inservice program sought to address several critical aspects of teacher renewal in connection with teacher collaboration. These included: (a) attitudes toward integration of handicapped students into regular classrooms, (b) communication between regular and special educators, (c) specific skills for regular education teachers to deal more effectively with special needs students, and (d) the establishment of a framework for sustained, within-building collaborative programming between regular and special educators.

The results suggest that public school personnel exposed to intensified inservice training that emphasized "doing," that

required active participation of building level classroom and administrative personnel, and that provided recognition for participation, appears to produce some notable effects. The findings imply that significant changes occurred in several important areas (e.g., teacher willingness and perceived ability to work with others, reported knowledge of individualized instruction and classroom management, and appreciation of the benefits that derive from collaborating with others). Anecdotal data gathered through group and individual interviews indicated that regular and special education teachers and administrative personnel were receptive to self-examination and willing to take some risks to participate in nontraditional training.

Even though these findings are encouraging, they must be interpreted with caution. As with any questionnaire data, it is impossible to determine the "say-do correspondence," the exact relationship between what respondents say and what they do. Second, although participants were guaranteed complete anonymity regarding responses to the evaluation, the outcome may have been influenced by knowledge that the school system was committed to teacher collaboration. The extent to which the outcomes of the present program generalize to educators in other localities is unknown. Finally, there is mounting evidence that the positive expressions of the teachers will need to be sustained through building-level support, if they are to endure as behavioral and organizational changes.

Singly and collectively, a number of factors will influence the extent to which schools experience success in introducing collaborative programming by regular and special educators. For example, issues such as administrative support, teacher release time, scheduling of meetings, assignment and acceptance of decision-making responsibilities, and recognition for team participation, each pose a special challenge to schools (e.g., Carter & Sugai, 1989). As never before, the finite resources of teachers, administrators, and support personnel are being routinely tested and sometimes exhausted. Even so, school systems can ill-afford to ignore the fact that the goal of "equality of educational opportunity" will be realized only when all educators accept the notion that their responsibility transcends the classroom and extends to every student in the school.

A promising solution to the tremendous need for more personalized instruction in the regular classroom is to provide teachers access to "prereferral" or "intervention assistance" (e.g., Carter & Sugai, 1989; Pugach & Johnson, 1988). Indeed, there is growing sentiment that by training regular and special educators to engage in a collaborative and informal problem-solving process, the two disciplines together can redefine the process by which students obtain specialized instruction (e.g., Pugach & Johnson, 1988). For that reason, the present inservice program is viewed as a small but promising step toward instilling in teachers

through a new sense of collegiality and experimentation an appreciation for building level collaboration.

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Table 1

Description of Interventions

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1. Individualized Instruction--Use of classroom teaching techniques tailored to meet the specific needs of a particular student(s).
2. Group contingency management--An intervention that consists of the systematic manipulation of consequences applied to: (a) the entire group, if the "average" performance of the group matches or exceeds a preselected standard (e.g., 85% correct in spelling), (b) each member within a group who achieves the standard, or (c) the entire group, depending upon each member attaining the standard.
3. Curricular adaptation--The modification of one or more aspects of the curriculum (i.e., content, presentation, or evaluation) to facilitate individual student learning.
4. Cooperative learning--Use of a team instructional arrangement in which the teacher specifies the objectives of the lesson, students assume responsibility for helping each other master selected knowledge or skills, and students are held individually accountable for their performance.
5. Support learning environment--A classroom characterized by clarity of academic and behavioral expectations, numerous opportunities to respond, high success rate, positive feedback, along with acceptance,and encouragement, and infrequent use of negative response options (e.g., nag statements).

Table 2

Questionnaire Responses of Participants and Non-Participants

Number of At-Risk Courses Taken

	0	1	2	3	>4
Participants	7	4	7	2	5
Non-participants	11	3	2	1	1

Number of At-Risk Students in My Class

	0	1	2-3	4-7	>8
Participants	1	0	5	9	9
Non-participants	0	2	4	8	3

Importance of Training Programs

	X	1	2	3	4	5
Participants	4.6	0	0	2	6	17
Non-participants	4.1	0	0	6	4	8

Help Colleagues Adjust

	X	1	2	3	4	5
Participants	3.3	0	3	14	5	3
Non-participants	2.8	0	5	11	2	0

Understand How to Work with Other Teachers *

	X	1	2	3	4	5
Participants	3.8	0	1	9	10	5
Non-participants	3.1	0	3	12	1	2

Table 2 continued

Communication and Problem-solving Skills

	X	1	2	3	4	5
Participants	4.2	0	0	3	18	6
Non-participants	3.9	0	0	3	14	1

Knowledge of Individualized Instruction *

	X	1	2	3	4	5
Participants	3.6	0	0	6	12	7
Non-participants	3.2	1	4	10	2	1

Knowledge of Classroom Management *

	X	1	2	3	4	5
Participants	4.2	0	0	2	15	8
Non-participants	3.6	0	2	6	8	2

Interest in Working with Colleagues **

	X	1	2	3	4	5
Participants	4.6	0	0	1	9	15
Non-participants	4.0	0	1	2	11	4

Ability to Work with Other Teachers *

	X	1	2	3	4	5
Participants	4.4	0	0	1	14	10
Non-participants	3.6	0	1	6	10	1

Ability to Resolve Problems with Colleagues **

	X	1	2	3	4	5
Participants	4.8	0	0	0	5	20
Non-participants	4.4	0	0	2	7	9

Table 2 continued

Comfortable Feeling Toward Working with Colleagues

	X	1	2	3	4	5
Participants	4.5	0	1	0	9	15
Non-participants	4.1	0	1	1	11	0

Working Together Leads to Improved Teaching *

	X	1	2	3	4	5
Participants	4.9	0	0	0	2	23
Non-participants	4.5	0	0	0	9	9

Importance of Regular Education Input into Special Education

	X	1	2	3	4	5
Participants	4.5	0	0	1	10	14
Non-participants	4.2	0	0	4	7	7

Effective Communication will Influence Attitude

	X	1	2	3	4	5
Participants	4.4	0	2	1	8	14
Non-Participants	3.8	0	2	5	5	5

Teacher Benefits from Helping

	X	1	2	3	4	5
Participants	4.6	1		1	5	18
Non-Participants	3.7		3	3	8	4

Teacher Benefits from 1:1 Conversations *

	X	1	2	3	4	5
Participants	3.4	1	7	3	8	6
Non-participants	3.2	1	4	2	10	1

Table 2 continued

Weekly Work-related Contacts with Colleagues

	1-3	4-6	7-10	10-15	>16
Participants	7	4	6	5	3
Non-participants	3	6	0	4	4

Table 3

Questionnaire Responses of Special Educators(SpecEd) and Regular Educators(RegEd)

Number of At-Risk Courses Taken *

	0	1	2	3	>4
SpecEd	0	0	4	0	3
RegEd	7	4	3	2	2

Number of At-risk Students in My Class *

	0	1	2-3	4-7	>8
SpecEd	0	0	0	0	7
RegEd	1	1	5	9	2

Importance of Training Programs

	X	1	2	3	4	5
SpecEd	4.4	0	0	1	2	4
RegEd	4.7	0	0	1	4	13

Help Colleagues Adjust *

	X	1	2	3	4	5
SpecEd	3.0	0	3	2	1	1
RegEd	3.4	0	0	12	4	2

Understand How to Work with Other Teachers

	X	1	2	3	4	5
SpecEd	4.0	0	0	2	3	2
RegEd	3.7	0	1	7	7	3

Table 3 continued

Communication and Problem Solving Skills

	X	1	2	3	4	5
SpecEd	4.1	0	0	1	4	2
RegEd	4.2	0	0	0	14	4

Knowledge of Individualized Instruction

	X	1	2	3	4	5
SpecEd	4.0	0	0	2	3	2
RegEd	4.1	0	0	4	9	5

Knowledge of Classroom Management

	X	1	2	3	4	5
SpecEd	4.3	0	0	0	5	2
RegEd	4.2	0	0	2	10	6

Interest in Working with Colleagues

	X	1	2	3	4	5
SpecEd	4.6	0	0	1	1	5
RegEd	4.6	0	0	0	8	10

Ability to Work with Other Teachers

	X	1	2	3	4	5
SpecEd	4.4	0	0	1	2	4
RegEd	4.3	0	0	0	12	6

Ability to Resolve Problems with Colleagues

	X	1	2	3	4	5
SpecEd	5.0	0	0	0	0	7
RegEd	4.7	0	0	0	5	13

Table 3 continued

Comfortable Feeling Working with Colleagues

	X	1	2	3	4	5
RegEd	4.6	0	0	0	8	0
SpecEd	4.4	0	1	0	1	5

Working Together Leads to Improved Teaching *

	X	1	2	3	4	5
SpecEd	5.0	0	0	0	0	7
RegEd	4.9	0	0	0	2	16

Importance of Regular Education Input into Special Education

	X	1	2	3	4	5
SpecEd	4.3	0	0	0	5	2
RegEd	4.6	0	0	1	5	12

Effective Communication will Influence Attitudes

	X	1	2	3	4	5
SpecEd	4.6	0	0	0	3	4
RegEd	4.3	0	2	1	5	10

Teacher Benefits from Helping

	X	1	2	3	4	5
SpecEd	4.9	0	0	0	1	6
RegEd	4.4	1	0	1	4	12

Teachers Benefit from 1:1 Conversations

	X	1	2	3	4	5
SpecEd	3.0	0	4	0	2	1
RegEd	3.7	1	3	3	6	5

Table 3 continued

Weekly Work-related Contacts with Colleagues

	1-3	4-6	7-10	10-15	>16
SpecEd	1	0	3	1	2
RegEd	6	4	3	4	1

-* statistically significant at p <.05

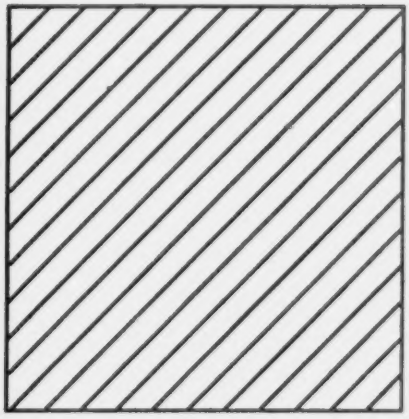
** approaches statistical significance

Figure Caption

Figure 1. Combining Inservice Training of Regular and Special Education Personnel

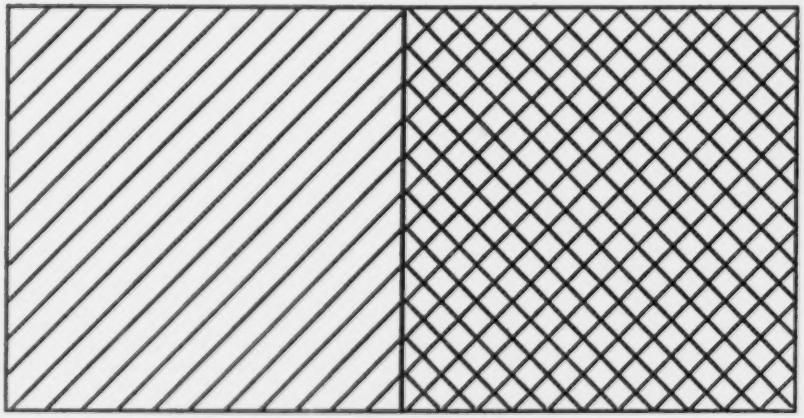
COLLABORATION TRAINING CYCLE

PHASE I



- Special educators only

PHASE II



- Special and regular educators and administrators

Appendix

Teacher Questionnaire

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of this instrument is to examine the extent to which teachers are able to work together successfully in order to ameliorate student learning and behavior problems. Accordingly, there are no right or wrong answers to the questions and we welcome your input based upon your opinions and your experiences. The results of this survey will be reported only in the aggregate and your answers will remain confidential. The questionnaire should take no longer than 10 minutes to complete.

Please respond to each question by circling the most appropriate response.

1. The number of courses which I have taken specifically addressing at risk students is _____.

   0 1 2 3 4 or more

2. The number of students in my class that I would consider low performing or difficult to teach is _____.

   0 1 2-3 4-7 8 or more

3. I believe that training programs designed to enable me to work closely with my peers in order to help at risk students are _____.

   1. unimportant 2. slightly important 3. moderately important
   4. quite important 5. extremely important

4. My willingness and ability to help my colleagues adjust classroom practices to special needs students is _____.

   1. very limited 2. limited 3. adequate
   4. extensive 5. very extensive

5. My understanding of ways to work with other teachers to help at risk children learn is _____.

   1. very unclear 2. unclear 3. moderately unclear
   4. clear 5. very clear

6. My skills to communication and problem solve are _____.

1. very weak 2. weak 3. adequate 4. good 5. excellent

7. My knowledge of individualized instructional techniques and how to apply them to specific classroom problems is _____.

1. very weak 2. weak 3. adequate 4. good 5. excellent

8. My knowledge of classroom management skills is _____.

1. very weak 2. weak 3. adequate 4. good 5. excellent

9. My interest in working with colleagues is _____.

1. very weak 2. weak 3. adequate 4. good 5. excellent

10. I would describe my ability to work together with other teachers to resolve student difficulties as _____.

1. very poor 2. poor 3. adequate 4. good 5. excellent

11. I believe that the ability to work with colleagues to resolve student problems could be _____.

1. unimportant 2. slightly important 3. moderately important
4. important 5. very important

12. I feel comfortable working with my teaching colleagues in order to help solve a child's learning or behavior problem _____.

1. strongly disagree 2. disagree 3. no opinion
4. agree 5. strongly agree

13. I believe that teachers working together can lead to improved teaching practices.

1. strongly disagree 2. disagree 3. no opinion
4. agree 5. strongly agree

14. I believe that regular classroom teacher's involvement in developing specialized programs for at-risk students experiencing difficulties is _____.

1. unimportant 2. slightly important 3. moderately important

4. quite important 5. extremely important

15. I believe that communicating effectively with my teaching colleagues will influence my attitude toward working with at-risk children.

1. strongly disagree 2. disagree 3. no opinion

4. agree 5. strongly agree

16. I believe that the teacher helping another teacher to work with an at-risk student benefits as much as does the receiving teacher.

1. strongly disagree 2. disagree 3. no opinion

4. agree 5. strongly agree

17. I find that I benefit more from informal one-to-one conversations with colleagues than I do from group discussions.

1. strongly disagree 2. disagree 3. no opinion

4. agree 5. strongly agree

18. Approximately how many work related contacts do you have with your colleagues weekly?

1-3 4-6 7-10 10-15 16 or more

19. Please provide any additional comments or concerns.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your time and your cooperation.